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ABSTRACT

Social studies teachers utilized outmoded textbooks to assign, discuss, and test a model that allowed little time for integration of other resources besides the text. With training, the teachers began to incorporate other instructional strategies. A questionnaire administered to six social studies teachers showed that five out of the six teachers used the text or notes based on the text on average 40 minutes out of every 50 minutes, and a questionnaire of 30 middle school students showed that 28 of the students studied for tests by exclusively using notes from lectures and questions from the end of the chapter. After administration of the questionnaires, teachers and students were trained in the use of innovative instructional strategies. The results indicated that the students spent approximately 1.5 periods per week using alternative strategies and resources other than the text. The teachers learned at least two new instructional strategies such as KWL and conceptual mapping. Resources used besides the text include the computer lab, newspapers, reference as well as authentic literature experiences, and hands on projects. All six of the teachers indicated in the post-questionnaire some growth using alternative resources and feeling comfortable using at least one strategy to some extent. (CK)

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Decreasing Reliance on Middle School Social Studies Textbooks through
Staff Development

by

Michelle Ray

Cluster 47

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A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth
Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1993

PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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August, 1993

This practicum report was submitted by Michelle Ray under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

8/28/93
Date of Final Approval of
Report

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Aknowledgments

The writer wishes to thank her children and parents for their constant and unflagging support during the practicum, the doctoral classes, and the seemingly never-ending assignments. In order for the writer to attend doctoral classes, my parents have unselfishly relinquished hundreds of hours of quality time helping with the child care that the writer usually provides. In addition, my friends and colleagues have accepted my excuses and broken engagements and at the same time given welcome advice and encouragement during this program.

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ABSTRACT

Decreasing Reliance on Middle School Social Studies Textbooks through Staff Development. Ray, Michelle M., 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Staff Development/Secondary/Middle School/Social Studies/Textbooks/Instructional Strategies.

This practicum was designed to decrease reliance on social studies textbooks through staff development in effective learning strategies and alternative resources. Sixth, seventh, and eighth-grade social studies teachers as well as an interdisciplinary sixth-grade team were trained in the use of KWL, conceptual mapping, and cooperative learning. In addition, the use of the computer lab, newspapers, and authentic literacy experiences were incorporated into the curriculum as alternative resources.

The writer used the Content Reading Including Study Systems (CRISS) manuals during teacher planning periods to instruct the teachers in the use of effective learning strategies. The computer program, Culturegrams, was used in the computer lab, newspapers, trade books, and reference books were also incorporated into the curriculum. The writer administered pre and post questionnaires to student and teacher participants.

Analysis of the data revealed that the teacher and student participants decreased the use of the social studies textbook and increased the use of alternative resources. In addition, all the teacher participants used at least one learning strategy with ease, and learned at least two to use in their classrooms. An unexpected outcome revealed that both teachers and students on the sixth-grade interdisciplinary team, learned and used at least two new strategies, and felt entirely comfortable with their use. This high comfort level reflected on the Likert scale, suggested interdisciplinary team learning and teaching is the most effective way to reinforce effective learning strategies.

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Chapter I

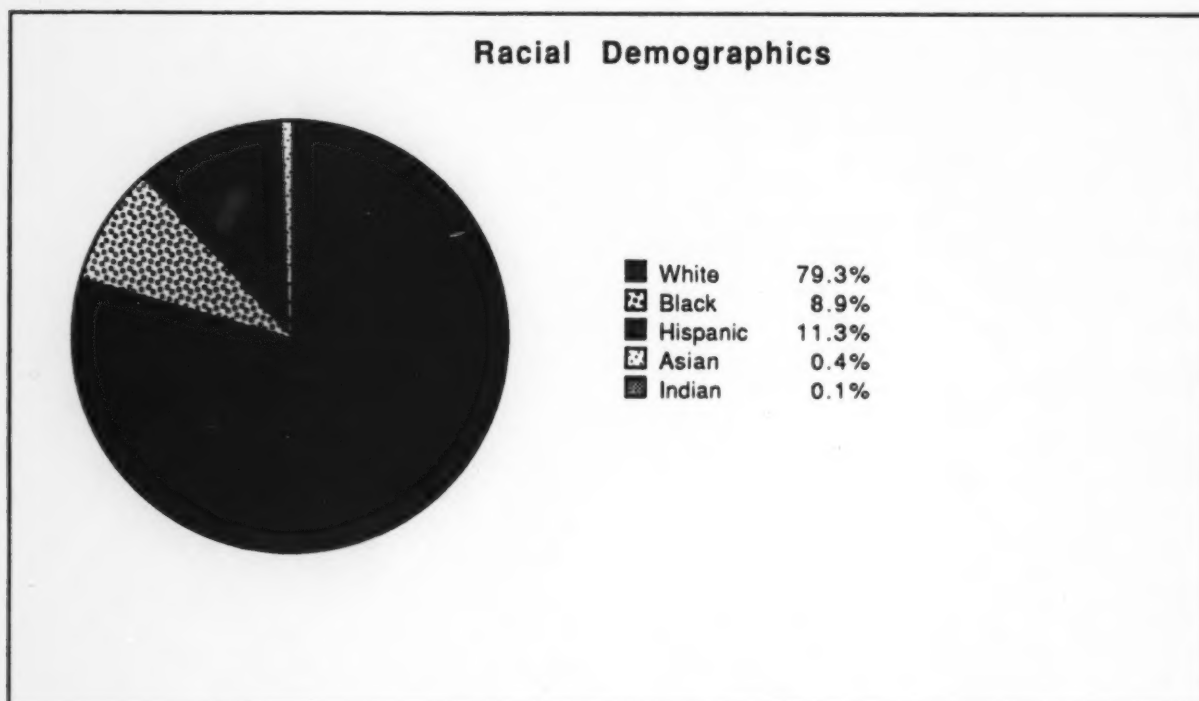
Introduction

Description of Community

The writer's work setting is a rural middle school containing sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students, located in an unincorporated area 30 minutes from a large Southern city. The school community is ethnically as well as socioeconomically diverse. Seventy-nine per cent of the 954 member student body is white, while 11.3% is Hispanic, 8.9% is African-American, .4% is Asian, and .1% is Indian (see Figure1).

Socioeconomically, students come from areas that include a large tennis and golf resort, cattle ranches with mobile homes or palatial estates, government housing projects, small farms, and migrant housing camps. Approximately 46 % of the student body participates in the free and reduced breakfast and lunch program.

Figure 1. Racial demographics of middle school students who are currently enrolled at the practicum site. (N = 945)



The school is located one mile from a major interstate interchange. Therefore the proximity to convenient transportation to a nearby major city is changing the socioeconomic status to a more

upscale suburban community from a former primarily agricultural community. As a result, students' parents who are employees of large corporations also reside in the school area as well as parents of students who are illiterate and unemployed.

The geographic area is 168 square miles and extends the full length of the county. Some students travel over an hour on the school bus to attend our two-year-old school. The entire school population area includes several small unincorporated communities, as well as a growing retirement community (the largest in the United States), and an old Southern town that still houses the traditional county seat including a town square. The county seat community includes 13 millionaires, but also has the largest percentage of our students on free and reduced meals live there.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The relatively new school is a lab school for a nearby state university housed in a large bay area city. Currently, 73 student pre-interns, interns, and practicum students participate in educational activities on our campus.

The middle school's staff includes three female administrators, two guidance counselors, one media specialist, one reading specialist, one social worker, an itinerant social worker, an itinerant nurse, one English as a second language specialist, and forty classroom teachers. Six social studies teachers, two on the sixth grade level, two on the seventh grade level, and two on the eighth grade level teach all of our 954 students. Three of the social studies teachers have elementary backgrounds, two are first year teachers, and only one has had any previous middle school teaching experience.

The writer is the reading specialist at this school whose job description includes teaching teachers and their students how to use appropriate learning strategies. As a reading specialist, the writer team teaches with teachers as well as modeling learning strategies for both students and teachers. The writer serves as a resource specialist in the area of reading and is often a problem solver and trouble shooter for learning difficulties experienced by students and teachers.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

During classroom instruction and team teaching with the social studies teachers, the writer observed that most of the instruction surrounded the use of the textbook. In fact, the sole resource used in many classes seemed to be the textbook.

An informal appraisal of the situation revealed that students frequently did not do their reading assignments and when they did, they derive little or no benefit from them. In brief, the students are "turned off" to the social studies curriculum by their textbook bound assignments.

In addition, none of the social studies teachers had attended inservices or workshops in the past year that instruct teachers in current strategies and resources available (other than the text).

It is apparent that teachers utilized an outmoded assign, discuss, and test model, which allowed little time for integration of other resources besides the textbook.

Problem Documentation

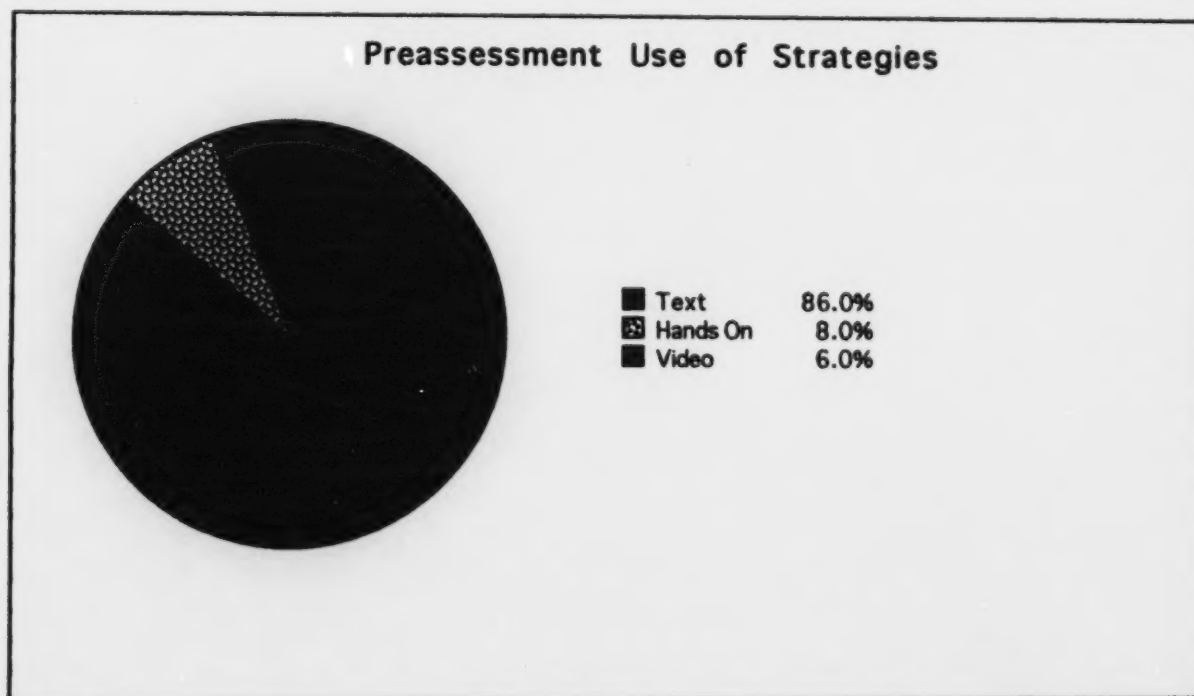
In order to further document the utilization of an outmoded assign, discuss, and test model, a four item questionnaire was administered to the six social studies teachers (see Appendix A). The results of the questionnaire completed by the six social studies teachers, showed that every day 5 out of the 6 teachers used the text or referred to notes that were based upon textbook use on the average of 40 minutes every 50 minute class period.

In addition, a four item questionnaire was administered to a representative sample (every 17th student, every social studies class period) of 30 students (see Appendix B). The results showed that 28 of the students studied for tests by exclusively using notes from lectures and questions from the end of the chapter.

Causative Analysis

The district textbook adoption guidelines supported the use of textbooks to implement the social studies curriculum. In fact, heavy emphasis was placed upon the textbook selection process. It was considered an honor to be on the textbook committee. Along with readability, the company's perquisites often were given equal billing. As a result, all the social studies teachers in the school overrelied upon the state adopted textbook (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Preassessment Use of Strategies.



Inadequate participation in inservices that provide current instructional approaches and alternative resources to the teaching of social studies concepts is apparent in the four item questionnaire. Four out of the six teachers had attended no inservices in the past year.

Inadequate experience in teaching subject matter and concepts appropriate to middle school students is common at the practicum site. Three out of the six social studies teachers have one year or less teaching experience. Two out of the six social studies teachers have taught only elementary students.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Overdependence on the textbook led to an inadequate authentic literacy experience. This overreliance on the textbook negated the students chances for real life literacy experiences.

Langer (1984), Smith and Feathers (1983), Puro and Bloome (1987), Edelsky (1991), and Myers (1992) bemoaned the lack of authentic literacy in the classroom especially when using textbooks. This

emphasis on the textbook was evident at the practicum site. Students were bored with their textbook bound assignments and many did not attempt to do them and when they did, they did not benefit from them. In a survey of teachers who assigned textbook reading material in their classes (97%), 38% reported that most of their students did not do the reading (Rieck, 1977).

Recent research indicated that reading is situation-based and there are vast differences between school-based learning and real-world learning (Tierney, 1990). Introducing alternative reading materials that deal with real-world problems benefitted the students by allowing them to apply appropriate school-based knowledge to real-life situations. If students have a personal investment in their reading, it is more meaningful to them (Hyde and Bizar, 1989).

Despite self-reports by teachers documenting uses of other resources and learning methods in the classroom, the textbook remained the primary resource in the classroom (Eccles and Midgley, 1989; Goodlad, 1984; Aies, 1988; California, 1987). This research was indicative of the identical problem at the practicum site. Although the social studies teachers listed activities that did

not require the use of the textbook, the results of the survey revealed that 40 out of 50 minutes of the class period was spent on text-related activities.

In addition, current textbooks lacked coherent formats understandable vocabulary, clearly written paragraphs, and presumed students possessed background knowledge they lacked (Miller, 1989).

Student boredom was reflected in the lack of participation in assigned readings and was directly related to poorly written texts.

Change within any organization is difficult. People are comfortable with the way things have always been done and resist change (Marsh, 1992; Vanderpool,1990; and Resnick,1988). Most of the social studies teachers were willing to try new experiences with their students, however, their cooperation could be limited if the change was threatening to their ways of doing things.

Middle School students have their own problems with change. The transition from narrative texts to content oriented material and expository texts confused students further (Tierney & Lapp, 1979). Compounding this problem was the lack of teacher training in how to teach students effective comprehension strategies. This was

emphasized in Becoming a Nation of Readers (1985). Exacerbating the issue was the teacher's dependency on the textbook, and the lack of teacher training in the use of alternate resources such as computer assisted instruction (Ross, 1988).

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of the practicum was that social studies teachers and students use effective learning strategies (KWL, conceptual mapping) and focus on additional resources other than the textbook by the end of the implementation period.

Expected Outcomes

Expected outcomes for the end of the implementation period were that all social studies students spend at least one period per week using alternative strategies and resources other than the

textbook. All six social studies teachers learn and use at least two new instructional strategies and at least two innovative resources. Likewise, all six social studies teachers report at least "some growth" in using alternative strategies to textbook-focused instruction. Similarly, all involved teachers report that they are comfortable (at the minimum) "to some extent" in using one strategy (see Appendix C).

Measurement of Outcomes

Outcomes were measured using the same written student questionnaire that was administered as a preassessment tool at the beginning of the practicum (see Appendix B). The original four item questionnaire had two multiple choice items and two open-ended listing items. The post practicum questionnaire for teachers added two questions using the Likert scale to measure growth and comfort level. It was administered to the participating teachers at the end of the implementation period. The fifth question assessed their growth in using alternatives to textbook instruction from "no growth" to "some growth" to "moderate growth" to "substantial"

growth." The sixth question assessed their comfort level in using alternative strategies from "not at all" to "to a little extent" to "to some extent" to "to a great extent" to "completely" (see Appendix C).

The representative sample of students was doubled (every 2nd and 17th student in every social studies class period) to make it a more valid and stable measure.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

Solutions to the problem that teachers utilize an outmoded assign, discuss, and test model, which allows little time for integration of other resources besides the textbook, centered around two categories. First, the research indicated that appropriate innovative learning strategies and instructional techniques allowed students to become active participants in their own learning. Second, alternative resources such as computer assisted instruction (CAI) could be incorporated into any curriculum to supplement the textbook.

Johnson and Johnson (1975, 1981) are renown for their studies

in the area of cooperative learning as an instructional approach. The only disagreement between these sibling researchers is the optimum size of the cooperative group (2 to 3). The old cliché "two heads are better than one" has been proven over and over again in their studies with students. Miller (1989) suggested that cooperative learning can compensate for a poorly written textbook. Cooperative learning not only helped with academics (social studies), but also promoted independence, heterogeneity, social skills, and relationships including role-playing and group dynamics (Bump, 1989). Morton (1990) combined cooperative learning with inquiry to promote making predictions and using logic to solve a problem. Another approach in instructional methods lead students into instructional teams using thematic units (Daly, 1990).

Using teaching strategies and prereading activities to empower students to become active learners through activation of their prior knowledge was effective (Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1989). In a summary of current research, a plethora of reading experts supported the idea that reading is an interactive process (Monahan & Hinson, 1988).

Reading in the middle school is a complex process.

Researchers tend to know more about how material is comprehended and written than why students read and write. The affective domain of interests and attitude toward reading must be addressed in order for teachers to help students become skilled readers and writers (Duffy, 1990). Recognizing the importance of prior knowledge, metacognition, the reading and writing connection, assessment, implementation, and staff development is a start, but "there are no simple procedures for effectively instituting and maintaining these guidelines in middle schools" (Duffy, 1990).

The ARC model addresses the reader's anticipation, realization, and contemplation (Vaughan & Estes, 1986). This three step program emphasized that students need to develop an attitude of inquisitiveness and learn to make predictions about what they are going to read, and set a purpose for reading. Second, in the realization process, students read for meaning in the text. At the same time, they are interacted with the text asking questions like "Is this what I predicted" and "Is this brand new information and do I know anything about this already?" Third, after reading, remembering if the student's own predictions were correct, comparing and contrasting new information with old information,

listening to other ideas from fellow students. This method is used in many classrooms and is taught at the university level to reading teachers.

Another instructional method is Content Reading Including Study Systems (CRISS). This project was developed by a district reading coordinator and district teachers. Their goal is to help students organize, understand, and retain course information. Theoretically, the students integrate new information with prior knowledge; students participate actively in their own learning; students self-monitor and select the best learning strategies for a particular reading assignment. The four components for instruction are: introduction, modeling, guided practice, and independent application (Santa, 1988).

Many schools throughout the country have adopted this program. It is part of the National Diffusion Network Projects and was developed from a grant from the Department of Education.

A second category of alternative resources such as CAI was investigated. Technology-based instruction is here. Development of effective ways to incorporate technology into the curriculum was investigated. Infusion of computers into the social studies

classroom has been a slow process, but teachers are interested and have met with some success (Ross, 1988). Integrating the computer into the curriculum over the entire school year has been effective. Incorporating simulations, telecommunications, and individual projects using utilities programs has been reported in middle school social studies classes (Vlahakis, 1988). The Systems Thinking and Curriculum Innovation (STACI) Project is a technology-based curriculum project on teaching and learning outcomes at the high school level in science and social studies. The program uses systems thinking and simulation software (Mandinach, 1989).

School-based instructional inservices training teachers in innovative instructional strategies and alternative resources were used to incorporate some of the solution strategies from the research. Certainly the ARC model or the CRISS program are prime candidates for teacher inservices. Other school-based inservices were held in telecommunications and computer literacy, with follow up activities developed by the writer, the media specialist and the social studies teachers. The telecommunication activity included pen pal letters to our French foreign exchange students.

As a result of the literature review, the use of selected

annotated bibliographies to help social studies teachers identify the best contemporary materials available to develop and implement innovative lessons were compiled by the reading resource specialist.

An international cultural fair was planned and implemented by the social studies teachers and a guidance counselor as an attempt to recognize and honor all of our students' diverse backgrounds and heritage. This project set the stage for further development of cultural units in social studies.

Cooperative learning was implemented to promote improvement of social skills as well as learning and working together. A natural pairing of cooperative learning and certain learning strategies like semantic or conceptual mapping was beneficial to the students.

Students had the opportunity to read fictional and nonfictional literature to expand their knowledge of basic geographic concepts. This method showed social studies teachers that literature, not just textbooks can be used to teach social studies concepts.

In evaluating the proposed solutions, the following observations were made. First, with only a three month

implementation period, certain solutions were eliminated. The STACI computer project was a year long intensive program that was too long and intensive for this practicum problem. Second, Daly's instructional teams based upon thematic units would take longer than three months to plan and implement, since each theme would last approximately a nine week grading period.

The plethora of research-based reading programs that were reviewed tend to overlap each other. This was good news. It reinforced the adequateness of the literature review. Ideas from all the reading programs were incorporated into the solution. The ARC model and the CRISS project were well suited to the middle school environment. Both projects address staff development which was a crucial issue at the practicum site. The CRISS project offered more support to school coordinators and teachers. It is in manual form and offered trainers to help implement the program at the school.

Certainly the technology issue was addressed at the practicum site. The school has two computer labs and every room has a computer. The media specialist is very interested in technology and often teaches inservices to both teachers and students. She is well aware of current computer software and usually can acquire

whatever is needed.

School-based instructional inservices that include cooperative learning and other instructional strategies were accommodated through team or department meetings. However, an annotated bibliography introduced at this point would be overkill. The social studies teachers were absorbing too many other new methods and strategies to be given an additional list at this time.

The foreign exchange program worked at one grade level. Introducing them through the foreign exchange program at the sixth grade level and continuing to communicate with the same French students through the telecommunications program at the seventh grade level will be exciting.

Trying to fit in an additional reading program besides the instructional reading strategies could not be done successfully through the social studies teachers in the same implementation period. However, the sixth grade reading teachers integrated their reading selections with the social studies concepts being taught.

Description of Selected Solution

After reviewing and evaluating the literature and other ideas, the writer determined that an eclectic approach to helping students and teachers use effective learning strategies (KWL, conceptual mapping) and focus on additional resources other than the textbook is the best solution.

Teachers were trained in the use of innovative instructional strategies through the CRISS project at school-based inservices. As a result, students used prereading, during reading, and postreading strategies. Criss includes a valid, measureable theoretical base. In addition, its recommended practices and techniques overlap other reading programs and include many research-based techniques that are attractive and have been proven successful with students. Their support is widespread and includes district level trainers in our school system that are readily available.

The boldest change used alternative resources with an emphasis on technology. Newspapers and literature were used in and out of the social studies classroom.

This project succeeded for the following five reasons. First,

the principal supported this program wholeheartedly. She included it in the school's strategic plans. Second, one interdisciplinary team of sixth-grade teachers requested to be included in the program. Third, the focus on authentic literary experiences interested students who had been overwhelmed by the textbook. Fourth, teachers became as excited as the students they taught, when they experienced new learning strategies that made their students active, not passive learners. Finally, as reading specialist, the writer continued to serve as a resource who any teacher may call upon for additional instructional help.

Report of Action Taken

Prior to the implementation of the proposed solution, the writer spoke with the participating social studies teachers, students, and the sixth grade interdisciplinary team involved in the practicum implementation concerning the proposed calendar of events to ensure their continued support in the project.

The following supplies, services, and personnel were obtained prior to the implementation period. Carol Santa's Content Reading

Including Study Systems manuals were ordered to be used in the teacher inservices. A memorandum including an agenda with the inservice training dates was sent to all involved parties. Books relating to geographic/social studies concepts were located or ordered. A newspaper subscription was ordered for interested classes. The computer lab was reserved for every Friday for 12 weeks. The media specialist trained the participating teachers in the use of the telecommunications program, PeaceNet.

The first week was an introduction time for the sixth grade team teachers, social studies teachers, and their students about the new learning program. The first workshop was conducted during the teachers' planning periods explaining the overall program and introducing the first learning strategy, conceptual mapping. The reading specialist modeled the strategy to the students as well as the teachers using a geographic concept in geography, a math concept in math, a developmental writing concept in reading and language arts, and a science concept in science.

During the next two weeks, the rules of cooperative learning were discussed as well as the organizational aspects. Practice in moving into groups quickly and quietly was included. Using our

concept maps from last week, students were grouped using color cards to practice their newly taught strategy. Friday was the first day in the computer lab. The students reviewed the procedures for using the word processing program, Microsoft Works. An introduction to the pen pal program with the French students using PeaceNet was discussed.

At the end of the month, the reading specialist team taught with the social studies teacher to reinforce the concept mapping and cooperative learning. The students regurgitated their geographic concept in map form as an evaluative instrument. The students typed their first letters to their pen pals.

At the beginning of the second month, a teacher workshop using KWL strategy on the country of France was demonstrated. The reading specialist modeled KWL with the students in the social studies classes on France. On Fridays, in the computer lab, the students read and answered the downloaded French students' mail.

During the second month, the entire team of teachers planned a brief interdisciplinary unit on France. The reading specialist completed the framework for the unit gathering resources (newspapers and computer programs).

The reading specialist team taught with the teachers to help with the interdisciplinary unit on France. Classes used cooperative learning. The students were encouraged to use KWL and mapping in their groups.

The students were evaluated on KWL. As an alternative form of evaluation, they filled in the L column on their KWL charts.

In their groups, the students chose a country of their ancestors and completed a conceptual map and part of their KWL chart. Using the Culture Gram computer program, the students located their country and printed a hard copy of the information. The students completed their country projects in preparation for the multicultural fair.

By the end of the third month, teachers and students completed their country's booth in preparation for the fair.

The fair was held after school from 7:00p.m. until 9:30p.m. Each grade level participated. The original plan had been to have the fair during the school day. Since so many parents and outside agencies were involved, the decision was made to have the fair in the evening. Because of transportation problems, many of the students could not participate in the fair. This was extremely

unfortunate to those students who had worked so hard in the preparation of their booths. Recommendations were made for the following year to have the fair during the afternoon of the school day as well as the evening hours.

The reading specialist administered the post questionnaire to the participating teachers and students. The reading specialist observed the participating students and teachers during five days to monitor the application of the new strategies and the use of alternate resources.

Generally, the acceptance by the teachers were mirrored by their students. The eighth-grade teachers were more resistant in incorporating the strategies in their actual teaching. In fact, the reading specialist felt that she was a guest speaker at times, and the teacher and students were merely being polite and humoring her by mimicking the instructional techniques. At the sixth and seventh-grade levels, this was not the case. Teachers and students were excited to participate and effectively demonstrated use of the strategies and alternative resources.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

Most of the social studies teachers instruction revolved around the use of the textbook. The students were "turned off" to social studies curriculum by textbook bound assignments. In addition, none of the social studies teachers had attended inservices or workshops on current strategies or resources available (other than the text). It was apparent that the social studies teachers utilized an outmoded assign, discuss, and test model, which allowed little time for integration of other resources besides the text.

The writer used an eclectic approach to helping students and teachers use effective learning strategies (KWL and conceptual

mapping) and focus on additional resources other than the textbook.

Teachers and students were trained in the use of innovative instructional strategies through the CRISS project at school-based inservices. CRISS includes prereading, during reading, and postreading strategies. In addition, its recommended practices and techniques overlap other reading programs and includes research-based techniques that have been proven successful with middle school students.

Computers were used as well as newspapers and relevant literature as alternative resources.

The following four outcomes and results are discussed. The first outcome was that all social studies students will spend at least one class period per week using alternative strategies and resources other than the textbook.

According to the results of the post student questionnaire, the students spent approximately 1.5 periods per week using alternative strategies and resources other than the text. These included computer lab time, use of the newspaper, research projects, book reports, posters, models, food preparation, and preparation and presentation for the culture fair.

The second expected outcome was that all six social studies teachers will learn and use at least two new instructional strategies and at least two innovative resources.

According to the results of the teachers' post questionnaire, all six social studies teachers learned at least two new instructional strategies. All teachers learned KWL and conceptual mapping. Three of the teachers used additional instructional strategies with their students. All six social studies teachers used at least two other resources besides the text. These resources included the computer lab, newspapers, reference as well as authentic literature experiences, and hands-on projects.

The third expected outcome was that all six social studies teachers will report on the Likert scale at least "some growth" in using alternative strategies to textbook-focused instruction.

According to the results of the teachers' post questionnaire on questions five and six, all of the teachers reported at least some growth in using alternative resources. Two reported substantial growth, two moderate growth, and two some growth on the Likert scale.

On the fourth outcome, all involved teachers will report that

they are comfortable (at the minimum) "to some extent" in using one strategy.

Using KWL or conceptual mapping all involved teachers reported feeling comfortable in using one strategy at least to some extent. In fact only one reported feeling comfortable to some extent, three reported feeling comfortable to a great extent, and one reported feeling completely comfortable.

Discussion

All expected outcomes were realized for both the students and the teachers. The writer realizes that often what is reflected in the results of the questionnaires is not necessarily reflected within the classroom.

Upon closer scrutiny of the eighth grade results approximately one half of the alternative resource time was spent in the media center using reference books. This limited use of other literary resources tended to further alienate students from the use of authentic literary experiences. Upon questioning the eighth grade

teachers regarding their emphasis on research, they responded that their students would be entering high school next year and would need to know how to write a research paper.

The culture fair preparations and presentations were a different story. These projects were done enthusiastically by almost every student in the school.

At the sixth and seventh grade levels, authentic literacy was prevalent through an interdisciplinary approach in reading using trade books on Africa. The Book-an-Hour technique was wholeheartedly embraced by both teachers and students in the seventh grade.

At the sixth grade level, the most surprising results were achieved by the sixth grade team that used KWL, conceptual mapping, cooperative learning, the newspaper, computers, and hands-on projects in every academic class, not just social studies. This interdisciplinary team's teachers and students knew their instructional strategies inside out.

In summation, the writer will definitely introduce all instructional strategies through teams, not departments. The overwhelming success of the sixth grade interdisciplinary team

using innovative strategies and resources has convinced the writer that this is the only way to go.

Recommendations

As mentioned in the discussion, considering the overwhelming positive results in the sixth grade with an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of effective learning strategies and alternative resources, this method is the best approach. Teaching the strategies in isolation within only one subject area is not the most productive method, even though results on the questionnaire looked positive overall.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum have already been shared with the school improvement team meeting at the end of the school year. Further dissemination will take place at our first reading specialists' meeting in the fall. The writer has been invited to China

by the ministry of education. The writer will share her results with the Chinese educators as well as the other American educators, including Taffy Rafael, who will be a part of our reading delegation in the fall.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PRE-PRACTICUM SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Social Studies Department Questionnaire

Please answer each of the following questions.

1. What is the average number of times per week that your students need their social studies textbook in class?
A. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4 E. 5
2. What is the average number of minutes spent using the social studies textbook (including notes, chapter questions, and terms from the textbook) per class?
A. 10 B. 20 C. 30 D. 40 E. 50
3. List any instructional activities that do not require the use of the textbook and the amount of time spent on each activity per week.

Instructional Activity

Amount of time per week

4. What inservices, workshops, or training have you had in the past year on current strategies and resources available other than the textbook?

Inservice

Approximate Date

APPENDIX B

PRE AND POST PRACTICUM SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Social Studies Student Questionnaire

Please answer each of the following questions.

1. What is the average number of times per week that you need your social studies textbook in class?
A. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4 E. 5
2. What is the average number of minutes you spend using the social studies textbook (including notes, chapter questions, and terms from the textbook) per class?
A. 10 B. 20 C. 30 D. 40 E. 50
3. List any instructional activities that do not require the use of the textbook and the amount of time spent on each activity per week.

Instructional Activity

Amount of time per week

4. How do you usually study for tests?
 - A. Study the answers to the questions at the end of the section or chapter.
 - B. Study my notes from the teacher.
 - C. Read the textbook.
 - D. Study the answers to the questions and my notes.

APPENDIX C

POST PRACTICUM SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Social Studies Department Questionnaire

Please answer each of the following questions.

1. What is the average number of times per week that your students need their social studies textbook in class?
A. 1 B. 2 C. 3 D. 4 E. 5
2. What is the average number of minutes spent using the social studies textbook (including notes, chapter questions, and terms from the textbook) per class?
A. 10 B. 20 C. 30 D. 40 E. 50
3. List any instructional activities that do not require the use of the textbook and the amount of time spent on each activity per week.

Instructional Activity	Amount of time per week
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. What inservices, workshops, or training have you had in the past year on current strategies and resources available other than the textbook?

Inservice	Approximate Date
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. In your opinion, how much growth did you experience in using alternative resources other than the textbook?
- A. Substantial growth
 - B. Moderate growth
 - C. Some growth
 - D. No growth
6. In your opinion, to what extent do you feel comfortable in using KWL or conceptual mapping?
- A. Completely
 - B. To a great extent
 - C. To some extent
 - D. To a little extent
 - E. Not at all